



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

ROBERT GORDON
DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 20, 2020

To: Health Care Providers and Healthcare Facilities

From: Joneigh Khaldun, MD, MPH, FACEP
Chief Medical Executive and Chief Deputy for Health
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)

Executive Summary

- To effectively combat the COVID-19 virus, Michigan must triple or even quadruple the number of daily COVID-19 tests completed in the coming weeks.
- The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is urgently asking for the partnership of health care providers, primary care providers, and all other clinicians in expanding testing across the state.
- MDHHS would like to alert you to significant available testing capacity throughout the state including NxGen Laboratories, a Grand Rapids laboratory certified by CLIA for high complexity testing that uses a method of COVID-19 testing that has received Food and Drug Administration Emergency Use Authorization.
- NxGen Laboratories is able to provide specimen collection materials, shipping from the collection site to their laboratory, and 48-hour turnaround on results.
- MDHHS strongly encourages health care providers interested in COVID-19 testing to reach out to NxGen Laboratories as a potential partner and to promote broad COVID-19 testing for patients who may need it, especially given recent expansions in test priority criteria.
- MDHHS will alert health care providers regularly as new laboratory and specimen collection capacity becomes available in the state.

Background

While Michigan has made important progress in expanding COVID-19 testing, the State still needs to triple or even quadruple the number of daily COVID-19 tests completed in the coming weeks to gain a full understanding of the disease's prevalence and contain its spread. Testing is a vital pillar of efforts to protect public health and save lives.

Limited testing availability early in the crisis required stringent prioritization criteria for patients to receive a test. Today, supply constraints for both specimen collection materials (e.g., swabs) and test kits still prevent many laboratories from serving their full capacity.

During this unprecedented crisis, MDHHS urgently seeks the partnership of health care providers, primary care providers, and all other clinicians in expanding testing across the state.

Available Laboratory Capacity to Support Testing

As part of broad efforts to expand testing access, MDHHS is writing to alert you to significant available testing capacity that could support thousands more tests per day. This capacity exists at NxGen Laboratories, a Grand Rapids laboratory certified by CLIA for high complexity testing that uses a method of COVID-19 testing that has received Food and Drug Administration Emergency Use Authorization.

NxGen Laboratories is able to provide specimen collection materials, shipping from the collection site to their laboratory, and 48-hour turnaround on results. NxGen has validated their testing using an endocervical swab rather than a nasopharyngeal swab; while the swabs have very similar shapes and clinical uses, endocervical swabs have a large and steady supply chain, while access to nasopharyngeal swabs is unfortunately very constrained.

As additional laboratory and specimen collection capacity becomes available in the state, MDHHS will keep health care providers updated and welcomes their partnership with any available laboratory.

How Can You Help

MDHHS strongly encourages health care providers interested in COVID-19 testing to reach out to NxGen Laboratories as a potential partner. We are all in this together and we must maximize use of all available testing capacity during this time.

Health care providers should promote broad COVID-19 testing for patients who may need it, especially given recent expansions in test priority criteria. Any patient with symptoms is now eligible for testing in Michigan, as well as health care workers, first responders, and essential workers (i.e., anyone still reporting to work in-person) with potential exposure, whether or not they exhibit symptoms.

Finally, health care providers can take part in an upcoming MDHHS sentinel surveillance network to test patients for COVID-19. This network will build on the existing Michigan Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet). Participating health care providers will send samples for ten patients who tested negative for flu to the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories for COVID-19 testing. This network will provide vital surveillance information to understand prevalence of COVID-19, provide early warning of potential new areas of spread, and inform the state's public health response. If you are interested in participating, please contact Shelly Doebler at DoeblerM@Michigan.gov.

For the latest information on Michigan's response to COVID-19, please visit www.michigan.gov/coronavirus. Thank you for all you do to serve the residents of Michigan at this difficult time.

Detailed Process for Interested Health Care Providers

1. Interested Healthcare providers are requested to fill in the attached form ("NxGen COVID-19 Test Onboarding Form") and email to covid.onboard@nxgenmdx.com

2. Supplies will be shipped out within 24 hours of receiving the completed form from NxGen and will arrive the following business day at the clinic.
3. Supplies will include: swab, test requisition form, bio-hazard bags, and return shipping package with prepaid FedEx air bills.
4. Clinics can also use their own couriers to drop off samples at NxGen MDx: 801 Broadway NW suite 203, Grand Rapids Mi 49504. 7 days a week between 8AM-5PM.
5. Expected turn-around time for results: 24- 48hrs within receipt of sample at lab.
6. Results will be sent via fax (to the number on the onboarding form) and will also be available via the patient portal (also to the email on the onboarding form).
7. NxGen MDx is integrated with MIHIN and is live with reporting to MDHHS.
8. For general test status: contact CS@nxgenmdx.com or call 855-776-9436 Ext 1.
9. For any other questions email: covid.onboard@nxgenmdx.com or call Naveen Kamireddi, Vice President of Operations: 616-516-3103 (cell).

Attachment

NxGen COVID-19 Test Onboarding Form